

'Allah's best friend Ibrahim'

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Long, long ago, about 4,000 years ago, in the faraway land of Iraq, a boy named Ibrahim (or Abraham) was born in the village of Ur. He was so gracious, tender-hearted and pure in faith that Allah gave him wisdom when he was still a child, and made him his best friend.

In those days, people used to worship stones and statues that even as a child, Ibrahim wondered why. Once when the townspeople were away, he broke all the idols in the shrine, except the biggest. When asked who has done this, Ibrahim calmly replied, "Ask the biggest idol. Why do you worship things that cannot even talk, move or understand?"



They became furious, and tried to kill him, by burning him alive. But Allah was with him. Allah commanded the fire, "O fire, be cool and peaceful for Ibrahim." A miracle took place, and the fire, instead of burning Ibrahim, became a cool refuge for him.

The moral of the story is that faith in Allah is the only thing that can save a believer in this world and the world to come.

Lonely, Barren Valley

When Ibrahim grew up, he became a great prophet, and preached Allah's message — first in his own land, then later in Syria, Palestine and Egypt. When a beautiful son was born to his wife, Hajar (or Hagar), Allah ordered Ibrahim to take the mother and baby Ismail (Ishmael) to the place now known as Makkah. It took them a long time to reach the lonely, barren valley near two small hills called Safa and Marwah. Ibrahim, ordered by Allah to leave his baby there along with his wife, then departed.

Little Ismail soon began to cry for water. Hajar ran from



one hill to another, but there was not a drop of water to drink, nor was there any human being to give her any. Allah then mercifully performed a miracle; a spring — later known as Zamzam — gushed forth beneath the baby's feet.

Hajar then gave some fresh spring water to the thirsty child, and so his life was saved. Ismail and his mother began

to live in the valley and, because of the Zamzam spring, more people gradually settled there, slowly building up a small town, later called Makkah.

The moral of the story is that believers who, despite their hardships, follow the path of Allah, will find that Allah will help them in miraculous ways, just as the child Ismail was saved by the miracle of the Zamzam spring.

The Great Sacrifice

One night, the Prophet Ibrahim dreamt that to please his lord, he was sacrificing his son, Ismail. Ismail was still a child, but he was a brave boy and when told about the dream he was quite ready to obey Allah's command. Without hesitating, he said, "Do what you are commanded father: God willing, you will find me one of the steadfast."

SACRED STORIES

Ibrahim then took his son to a place, now known as Mina — a valley near Makkah. Satan appeared there and tried to dissuade him from sacrificing his son but Ibrahim just pelted him with pebbles. As Ibrahim took up a knife to sacrifice Ismail, Allah sent the Angel Jibril (Gabriel) with a ram to be sacrificed instead.

Allah was so pleased with the readiness of the Prophet Ibrahim to sacrifice his beloved son that he commanded the believers to observe this day as Eid al-Adha or the Feast of Sacrifice. Greatest Stories From The Quran, Goodword Kids ■